



Improving Family Communication

Being able to express both positive and negative feelings and solve problems together are keys to a successful and happy family. Here are some tips for developing empathetic listening and communication skills.

- **Think before you speak:** Take the time to contemplate your message.
- **Be as clear as possible:** Mixed and incomplete messages are easy to misinterpret.
- **Stay on topic:** Avoid bringing up past offenses.
- **Match your tone to your message:** Do not use humor to avoid a meaningful, serious topic.
- **Refrain from judging or disagreeing while listening:** Aim for dialogue, not a lecture.
- **Avoid criticizing, ridiculing, embarrassing, or nagging:** Demonstrate that fair, constructive and open dialogue is the best way to settle differences.
- **Be consistent with your partner:** Do not confuse a child by disagreeing or arguing with the other parent.
- **Talk to a young child on his or her level:** Get down on his or her eye level to communicate effectively.

Here when you need us.

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